Summer 2008 Issue
$3.00

Eco-Sense

Environmental Health Association of Ontario
L'Association pour la santé l'environnementale de l'Ontario

Announcing Our New Name . . .

the **Environmental Health Association of Ontario** – as of April 16, 2008. Environmental Health has gained public recognition, and the "environmental health" handle will make a clearer distinction between our organization and those organizations dealing solely with "conventional" allergies. AEHA-Ottawa has been providing services to members in outlying areas for a number of years, so nothing has changed except that more funding avenues should open up to us as a provincial group. Satellite support groups such as Toronto will be the vehicles to provide support to outlying areas. AEHA Quebec has also changed its name to EHA Quebec, so we will be aligned with EHA BC and EHANS as provincial organizations.

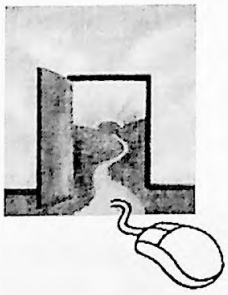
In this Issue:

Features

Safe Housing Ottawa 6
Canada-wide Housing Connection 6
How to Report Adverse Reactions 7
Source Book....8
The Sensitive Diner....9
Good Food Box....10
Plasco Project....10
Proposed Law for Product Labeling 10
Employers Must Adapt to Needs (French & English) 11
Help Line – Volunteers Needed 12
Walk 2008 Pictures 12,13,16
When You Need Support....13
Dad's Hidden Influence....15

Sections

Ottawa Branch Contacts 2
AEHA Hotline....2
Definition of Environmental Sensitivities....3
Membership – How to Join....3
Donations 3
President's Message....4
A Note from the Executive Director 4
Announcements & Member Classifieds....14
Our Advertisers 13, 17-19
Advertising Rates....19
Events Calendar 20
Recognition of Walk Sponsors....20



Visit our website at www.ehaontario.ca

Eco-Sense

A publication of the Environmental Health Association of Ontario. Reprinting of original articles is permitted with appropriate acknowledgment.

EHAO: Self-help, Education, Prevention

EHA Ontario is one of the branches operating under The Human Ecology Foundation of Canada (HEF Canada). HEF Canada is a registered charity operated by volunteers, with branches in cities across Canada. Together we strive to promote awareness of environmental conditions that may be harmful to human health, and to bring individuals together for mutual support and education.

Our Thanks to the Contributors

- *Mary de Bassecourt*
- *André Fauteux*
- *Linda Nolan-Leeming*
- *Jane Wilson*

Eco-Sense Production & Circulation

Editing: Jane Wilson

Advertising: Mary de Bassecourt

Distribution: Mary de Bassecourt
Volunteers Needed

Layout: Mary de Bassecourt

NOTE TO CONTRIBUTORS

Eco-Sense welcomes ideas for articles, written submissions or suggestions for reprinting articles from other sources. Reprinted articles must be submitted with permission from the original publisher, and with the name of the source and date of publication. These articles should be timely (i.e., published within the previous six months). All articles submitted to *Eco-Sense* should be factually correct and with assumptions, assertions and facts cited duly referenced.

DISCLAIMER

The opinions expressed in *Eco-Sense* articles, particularly those items excerpted or reprinted from other sources, are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Environmental Health Association of Ontario, its board of directors, or editorial team. Advertisements or articles do not imply that EHAO endorses any particular product or services mentioned therein. Readers with multiple sensitivities are advised to assess products carefully since individual sensitivities may vary.

Deadline for Fall 2008 Issue:
October 1, 2008

Ontario Branch Contacts

President	Linda Nolan-Leeming 613-692-4840 president@ehaontario.ca
Executive Director	Mary de Bassecourt 613-721-6910 office@ehaontario.ca
Past President/Ex-Officio	Barb Leimsner
Acting Vice-president	Lawrence Clooney 613-825-9969
Secretary/Treasurer	Cathy Sward 613-836-2073 swards@rogers.com
Board Members at Large	Dr. Jenny Armstrong Louise Hannant Iris Thorogood
Legal Advisor	Scott Simser scott@simserconsulting.com
Advertising	Mary de Bassecourt office@ehaontario.ca
Display	*volunteer needed*
Fundraising	Mary de Bassecourt
Help Line	Carole Lebel 613-860-2342
Audio/Visual Library	*volunteer needed*
Meat Freezer	*For appointment* Lawrence Clooney lkclooney@hotmail.com 613-825-9969
Membership: **Kits & Distribution**	Matilda Samuel
Membership: **Membership List**	Mary de Bassecourt office@ehaontario.ca
Newsletter	Contact: Mary de Bassecourt office@ehaontario.ca
Website	webmaster@ehaontario.ca

AEHA Welcomes:

- Suggestions for presenters and topics
- English articles for *Eco-Sense*
- Articles in French for *Eco-Sense*

For more information about EHA Ontario, contact us at:

EHAO
Box 33023
Ottawa, ON K2C 3Y9

or call 613-860-2342 / or e-mail: office@ehaontario.ca
or visit our website at: **www.ehaontario.ca**

EHAO Help Line: 613-860-2342

EHA Ontario

Join us!

Membership is $25/year and includes:

- access to informative meetings and workshops,
- EHAO's *Eco-Sense* newsletter,
- access to the *Source Book,*
- access to wild game meats (when available) at reasonable cost,
- speaking with one voice on issues that affect the environmentally sensitive,
- information on upcoming events,
- information about conferences, etc.
- opportunity to list items in our "buy, trade and sell" section in *Eco-Sense* and on our website
- opportunity for inclusion in the Safe Housing Ottawa waiting list, and
- access to the Canada-wide Housing Connection.

If joining after Sept. 1, membership fees are prorated to the following September, according to the month in which you join:

Sept - $25	Dec - $19	Mar - $13	June - $7
Oct - $23	Jan - $17	Apr - $11	July - $5
Nov - $21	Feb - $15	May - $9	Aug - $28*

**The August joining fee covers a 13-month period.*

We Welcome Your Donations

As a non-profit organization, we welcome your donations to help us to carry out the important work of helping those with environmental sensitivities help themselves. There are a number of ways you can give:

- *general donations*
- *through the United Way (Donors can specify that their donations go to EHA Ontario.)*
- *memorial donations made to EHA Ontario in memory of a loved one*
- *a Christmas gift to a friend or relative of either a membership subscription or a donation to EHA Ontario*

Cheques should be made out to EHA Ontario and mailed to EHAO, Box 33023, Ottawa, ON K2C 3Y9. Our charitable number is: BN 13273-7099RR0001. For more information, e-mail office@ehaontario.ca, or call the Help Line at 613-860-2342.

If you want happiness for a lifetime,
help somebody.
- from a Chinese proverb

Environmental Sensitivities – a Definition

Reprinted selection from "It's Time for Help in Quebec," Fall 2004 Eco-Sense *(a revision of an EHA Quebec article by Rohini Peris).*

Environmental sensitivities can occur when people become sensitive to substances or phenomena in their everyday environment at levels well below what would be considered to be acceptable to "normal" people. Sensitivity reactions can be triggered by [the toxic chemicals in] scented products, cleaning products, laundry detergents, paints, petrochemicals, cigarette smoke, pesticides, pets, plants, fuels, [and from] electromagnetic radiation, molds, and foods.

The effect of environmental sensitivities can be overwhelming. Productive people may suddenly or gradually become unable to tolerate offices, homes, schools, hospitals and public places. Employers, who may or may not be aware of the problem, may refuse to make the accommodation necessary to allow people affected to continue working in safety. Many people with sensitivities lose their jobs if they are not provided with the accommodations they need to work productively. Some become homeless. All too often, retirement savings are depleted and debts are incurred in an attempt to create safe living conditions and to fund the cost of treatment. Treatment of these problems can be expensive and difficult to obtain, and includes avoidance of offending agents. Some people with sensitivities do improve after many years if they are able to find a safe environment in which to live and work, and if they can obtain (and afford) treatments that are both tolerable and effective for them. Sadly, despite skills and education, some people with sensitivities end up on social assistance. Many become socially isolated as they are forced to retreat from places and activities they love, and for some, the devastation extends to losing spouses, family and friends who may not believe that they are ill.

This disability may be invisible, but it is real. Like others with disabilities, persons with sensitivities have special needs which include, but are not limited to: housing in a safe and tolerable environment so that their bodies can heal, well-tolerated, environmentally safe products available at a reasonable cost, consumer self-help groups, a support system, tolerable meeting places, publicly funded treatments, safe hospitals, schools and other public facilities, and accommodation in the workplace. Like all Canadians, we are entitled to freedom from discriminatory treatment, which includes the right to accessible workplaces, accommodation and public facilities. Notably, environmental sensitivities have been recognized as disabilities by the Canadian Human Rights Commission and many provincial human rights commissions.

Message from the President

BY LINDA NOLAN-LEEMING

Dear Members,

I would first like to wish you all a most happy and healthy summer with the knowledge that this will be the last time you will be unwillingly exposed to the spraying of toxic pesticides! We owe a debt of gratitude to our Premier and to the many people that fought long and hard on this crucial Health issue.

"Safe Housing Ottawa" is now incorporated and will apply for funding on June 27th. If approved, we will break ground in 2009 with completion in 2010. We have plans to build approx 30 Environmentally Safe units in a lovely area close to amenities, green space and with access to the Ottawa River. Deepest gratitude to our wonderful team which includes our architect, Philip Sharpe, Jill McFarlane (consultant), Jonathan Westeinde (developer) and all the others that have worked so diligently these last four years. Let's all keep our fingers crossed that our application is approved!!

Mary and I attended a conference in Toronto in April to discuss a proposal for construction of the "Environmental Health Centre of Ontario". There was unanimous support for this project which is being driven by the Ontario College of Family Physicians. If funded, this centre will provide diagnoses, treatment, physician training, dissemination of information and many other essential services. We will keep you abreast of further progress but as you can see, the time is now here for positive actions to deal with the growing epidemic of ES/MCS.

AEHA provided an information seminar to the managers and physician managers at Health Canada on June 3rd. This was another great opportunity for our group and we would like to thank Meg Sears for delivering "A Health Perspective on ES/MCS" on our behalf and Francois Savard for assisting with bilingual introductions. A special thanks also to Paula Agulnik of REACH for making it all possible.

In closing, we would not be where we are today without the tremendous work of Mary de Bassecourt. We owe a debt of gratitude to her and the others who so kindly volunteer their time to this organization. We are growing so very fast and would appreciate any help that you can give.

I wish you all the best and remember, we are now the Environmental Health Association of Ontario!

Have a great summer,

Linda Nolan-Leeming

President, EHAO

A Note from the Executive Director

As we're plunged into the heat of summer, there is some comfort in the fact that this will be our last summer to experience the harmful effects of cosmetic pesticide spraying in Ontario! We are most pleased to acknowledge the provincial pesticide ban and the City of Ottawa's support of Bill 64 with the amendment to permit stricter municipal bylaws. A few of us were present at City Hall when the Community and Protective Services Committee voted in favour of endorsing this provincial bylaw, and we're pleased that City Council also voted in favour of it. It's been a long time coming, and EHA Ontario has been an active participant towards this progress!

Here are some of the other EHA Ontario events, issues, and activities since our last issue of *Eco-Sense*.

- On April 18, Linda and I attended a workshop in Toronto on determining a need for an Environmental Health Centre in the Great Lakes Basin. Linda tells more about this exciting development in her report.
- May 8 we held the well-attended seminar "Employment & Human Rights Issues for the Environmentally Sensitive." Lori Harreman and Samantha Lamb, lawyers with Jewitt Morrison & Associates, and who provide legal services through Reach Canada, spoke on these issues as they pertain to those with the disability of environmental sensitivities. Interest ran high, lots of questions were asked and answered, and it was well after 10 p.m. when we wound up the evening by turning off the lights! If you were unable to attend or would like a copy of an audio of this presentation, it will be available shortly on our website. The cost is $5 for download from our website and $10 for a mailed CD. On payment, you will receive a link, user name and password by e-mail, or your CD will be mailed to you. (Mail payment to EHA Ontario, Box 33023, Ottawa, ON K2C 3Y9.)
- On May 15, I attended a seminar "Accessibility is the Law in Ontario" sponsored by Reach Canada. This was a well-attended seminar with representatives from community, social and health service providers, lawyers, students, agencies, community and small and large businesses and retail and service industries, as well as people with disabilities. The seminar provided information and addressed legal issues about the accessibility customer service standards regulated by the Province of Ontario. Presenters set the context for this legislation, offering tips on how to make sure service providers are ready for compliance. There's work to be done in this area, because the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act does not include a category that covers environmental sensitivities yet.
- On May 24, our Walk 2008 took place in Andrew Haydon Park. All participating said they enjoyed

➲

the lovely surroundings and fun day. The weather was great, though a little breezy in the Pavilion. Net proceeds from sponsorships and donations were over $2,500 – a considerable increase over the $700 we raised last year. Many thanks to our donors and sponsors for their generous support. Please note our recognition of donors notice on the back page. We encourage our members to support our sponsors as they have supported us. Many thanks to our collectors for their hard work; in particular, I would like to recognize Carole Lebel for her exemplary achievements in collecting donations and sponsorships totaling over $500. Murray Kydd also deserves special mention for his many hours of volunteer work and for creating and donating our banner that we can use at future events. Murray helped prepare the other signage too, and pitched in during the event. He drew the route map and Iris Thorogood provided tremendous professional help with the descriptions of conditions and illnesses featured at each Walk stop. Next year we hope to grow this event much bigger. We'll be forming a Walk 2009 committee in September, so if you're interested in joining in the fun while being part of our annual fundraiser to support our growing need for services, please email office@ehao.ca or call the Help Line at 613-860-2342.

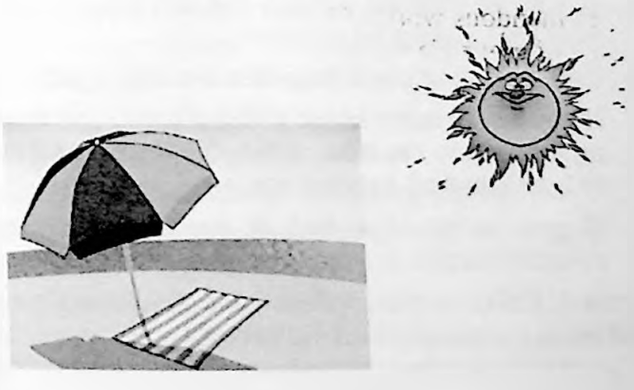
- June 3 Meg Sears and Francoise Savard made a presentation on environmental sensitivities to a Health Canada Lunch 'N Learn group.
- In April our Board voted to change our name to the Environmental Health Association of Ontario! All of our other branches are provincial, and we have had members all over Ontario for many years, so this change reflects our practices, opens up other potential funding opportunities, and reflects the growing awareness of environmental health. We will remain Ottawa-based, and we hope members in other outlying areas will consider forming satellite support groups. Over the summer, we plan to make all the necessary changes to our website, documentation, etc. So if you receive mail or emails from EHAO, that's us!
- Our Toronto satellite support group held its first meeting in Toronto at the home of Bev Agar, with others participating by conference call. Bev Agar and Linda Sepp are coordinators for this new group and they have both been very active members working on, among other things, housing and accessibility issues. They are now spearheading a safe housing project in Toronto. Many thanks, Bev and Linda! It's truly amazing how much Bev and Linda have achieved in spite of the big challenges of their environmental illness. If you live in an outlying area and would like to know how what the benefits of starting up a satellite support group would be and how you'd go about it, contact office@ehao.ca.
- In May, our Board accepted a draft set of Board policies and procedures that we hope to review and revise further in the fall. We have grown so much that these policies and procedures have become essential tools for our operations.
- We changed the name of our Hotline to Help Line because we feel this is a better descriptor for this valuable service. If you can spare a few minutes weekly picking up messages and responding to calls, please contact office@ehao.ca and I'll connect you with Carole Lebel, who is doing a tremendous job at growing this network of volunteers and providing excellent support via the Help Line to our members and the public – or call the Help Line at 613-860-2342 and say "I want to help!"
- Paramount among our priorities now is completing and submitting fundraising applications, because we need dollars to support our growing need for services. Thanks to Nancy Jennings for her many hours of work on fundraising. Welcome and many thanks to Lawrence Clooney for his amazing expertise and time spent on fundraising applications.
- Soon I will be setting up new donated database software which should make the job of tracking membership easier and faster once everything is in place. Speaking of membership, on September 1, membership renewals will be due again. When you receive your renewal notice in August or September, please try to return it with your payment as soon as possible. Our membership fees (still only $25 a year) are an important part of our revenue and are badly needed to support our services. I'd like to see a 100% return rate by October this year so that we can move on to work on all the other important issues demanding our attention.

Thanks as always for your continuing support and kind words – that's what keeps us ticking along! We urge more members to join with us and volunteer their time and expertise to keep EHAO moving forward!

Please note that the office will be closed during the month of August.

Have a wonderful and safe summer, everyone!

– Mary



EHA Ontario's Safe Housing Ottawa

To be added to the safe housing waiting list, please contact EHA Ontario by e-mail or Canada Post (see EHAO contact info on page 2) with the following information:

- your name
- phone number
- Canada Post address
- e-mail address
- specify 1 b/r, 2 b/r, multi-family, single family, etc.
- price range (rental)
- Are you interested in purchasing?
- Are you in temporary unsafe accommodations?
- Very briefly, outline other requirements.

To those on our Safe Housing Ottawa waiting list who also applied for the Housing Registry, if you move, please be sure to let both the Ottawa Housing Registry know by Canada Post and EHAO by e-mail or the Help Line.

Update

We have now officially incorporated "Safe Housing Ottawa," and our funding application was submitted on June 27. We're anxiously waiting to hear if we will be one of the successful applicants; if so, we will break ground in 2009 and move-in dates will be in 2010! As soon as funding is confirmed, the pace will pick up dramatically and a stakeholders' meeting will be held to discuss all aspects of the project. In the meantime, if you have an immediate need for housing, please phone the Canada-wide Housing Connection at 1-613--278-0463 and leave a message for Philip.

Tips from the Canada-wide Housing Connection

1. Tell us when you've found a place.
2. If you are offering a place and that place is no longer available, please let us know.
3. Call us if your place becomes available again.
4. If you buy or rent a house with a separate apartment, you might want to consider calling the Housing Connection to help you find a roommate.
5. If you know of a bed & breakfast or temporary accommodation in your area, please let us know.

Contact Philip at the Canada-wide Housing Connection and leave a message: 1-613-278-0463.

The Housing Connection encourages you to photocopy and post this ad at health food stores, doctors' offices, or anywhere in Canada where EI people are likely to see it.

Canada-wide Housing Connection is a Canada-wide service that connects people who need EI-safe housing with people who can provide safe housing. Please call me if you have a house or room for rent, or if you would be willing to provide short-term housing for someone whose home is temporarily not safe (or if you would be willing to allow someone to camp temporarily on your property during an emergency). If you run a bed and breakfast or are a real estate agent, please tell me what accommodations you are willing to make for chemically-sensitive people. Please call if you are looking for a house or room either to rent long-term, or for a short-term place to stay during an emergency. Also, please call if you are looking for a roommate. I will attempt to connect people who have similar housing needs and live in the same general area. Calls from anywhere in Canada, Quebec, or the northern U.S.A. are welcome. Call Philip at 1-613-278-0463.

Réseau national de logement est un service national destiné à mettre en rapport les personnes souffrant de sensibilités environnementales qui ont besoin d'un logement sain avec les personnes susceptibles de fournir ce genre de logement. Veuillez communiquer avec moi si vous avez une maison ou une chambre à louer, ou si vous êtes disposé à fournir un logement à court terme à une personne dont le logement n'est actuellement pas sain (ou encore, si vous autoriseriez une personne à camper temporairement sur votre propriété en cas d'urgence). Si vous possédez un gîte du passant ou êtes agent immobilier, veuillez m'indiquer les mesures d'adaptation que vous êtes disposé à prendre à l'égard des personnes ayant des sensibilités environnementales. Veuillez également me téléphoner si vous cherchez une maison ou une chambre à louer à long-terme ou un logement où demeurer à court-terme en cas d'urgence, ou si vous cherchez un colocataire. Je tenterai de mettre en rapport les personnes ayant des besoins semblables qui vivent dans la même région. Nous encourageons les personnes de partout au Canada et du nord des États-Unis à nous appeler. Veuillez communiquer avec Philip au numéro de téléphone 1-613-278-0463.

Also check out the safe housing section of our website bulletin board at ehaontario.ca to find listings of short- and long-term accommodations, both available and needed, as well as our member classifieds in each issue of *Eco-Sense*.

Consumer Product Safety Laws and Adverse Reaction Reports: How You Can Report

Household Chemicals

Many Canadians use household chemical products such as cleaning liquids and powders, polishes, drain cleaners, paint and paint thinners, and windshield washer fluid. These products may present health risks when users are unintentionally exposed to the contents. Most exposures occur to young children who do not understand the hazards.

Health Canada has in place regulations, consumer information sheets and education materials that provide advice to help you reduce the potential for unintentional exposures to household chemicals.
http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/cps-spc/house-domes/chem-chim/index_e.html

Personal Products

Every day, Canadians use many different cosmetics and personal care products such as shampoo, shaving cream and lipstick. Using tanning beds and lying in the sun are also popular pursuits. Health Canada's aim is to ensure that the personal products you use are safe and that you know how to use them properly, and that you are informed on the risks associated with solar UV radiation.
http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/cps-spc/person/index_e.html

Want to report an incident?

Report a product-related injury or death, or a safety concern regarding a Cosmetic or personal care product:
http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/home-accueil/contact/hecs-dgsesc/cosm_e.html

Household Products

Many products in your home are designed to make life safer, healthier and more efficient. Yet the unsafe use of some of these everyday products might cause undesirable health effects.
http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/cps-spc/house-domes/index_e.html

Want to report an incident?

Report a product-related injury or death, or a safety concern regarding a Consumer product:

http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/home-accueil/contact/hecs-dgsesc/pso-bsp_ncr-rcn_e.html

Cosmetics and Personal Care

http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/cps-spc/person/cosmet/index_e.html

The use of cosmetics and personal care products is a daily ritual common among the Canadian public. Cosmetics include, but are not limited to cleansing products, make-up, perfumes, deodorants, and soap.

Some products that appear to be a cosmetic may actually be classified differently and managed by different programs within Health Canada.

Products that have a therapeutic claim or that contain certain ingredients not permitted in cosmetics are considered to be drugs, for example, sunscreens.

Products containing natural therapeutic ingredients are considered natural health products (NHPs), for example, many toothpastes.

Items where ingestion is intentional and that do not have a therapeutic effect or claim are food products.

Insect repellent lotions and sprays are pesticides.

Products (such as creams, lotions, or shampoos) providing a therapeutic benefit to animals are veterinary drugs.

Health Canada's Role

The goal of Health Canada's Cosmetics Program is to protect the health of the Canadian public by minimizing the risk associated with the use of cosmetics sold in Canada. Various Acts and Regulations provide the basis from which this is done. Tools such as the Cosmetic Ingredient Hotlist, which outlines prohibited or restricted ingredients in cosmetics, are used to minimize this risk.

Where a cosmetic product may pose a health concern, more information may be requested from the company; testing on the product may be undertaken; or a risk assessment may be generated.

Options for corrective measures include:

- re-formulation or re-labelling of the product;
- removal from sale/voluntary recall;
- import refusal;
- seizure and disposal; or
- issuance of a public advisory.

The Cosmetic Regulations

All cosmetics sold to consumers in Canada must meet the requirements of the Food and Drugs Act, the current Cosmetic Regulations, and all other applicable legislation to ensure that they are safe to use and do not pose any health risk.

The Cosmetic Regulations of the Food and Drugs Act require that cosmetics sold in Canada must be manufactured, prepared, preserved, packed and stored under sanitary conditions. The manufacturer must notify Health Canada that it is selling the product and provide a list of the product's ingredients.

How to Report an Adverse Reaction

You may need to provide the following information:

- Your name, address and telephone number in case additional information is required
- The product brand name and product type, and any descriptive information such as cream, spray cologne, etc.

- The name and address of the manufacturer as it appears on the label and any lot or code number
- How long and often you used the product
- A description of the adverse effect you experienced, including whether the reaction occurred while you were applying the product or whether it developed some time after the application
- Whether you have consulted a physician about the problem
- Treatment and outcome of the reaction

By reporting adverse reactions to cosmetics, consumers will be helping the Cosmetics Program identify worrisome products and indicate where corrective action may be required. Report a product-related injury or death, or a safety concern regarding a Cosmetic or personal care product: http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/home-accueil/contact/hecs-dgsesc/cosm_e.html

To Report Adverse Reactions to Pesticides

http://www.pmra-arla.gc.ca/english/legis/aer-e.html

To Report Adverse Reactions to Drugs and Health Products

The following online form is intended for the voluntary reporting of suspected adverse reactions by health professionals and consumers involving both prescription and non-prescription pharmaceuticals, biologics (including fractionated blood products, as well as therapeutic and diagnostic vaccines), natural health products, and radiopharmaceuticals: https://www6.hc-sc.gc.ca/medeffect/intro.do?method=intro&applanguage=en_CA

Reactions involving preventative vaccines, e.g., flu or travel vaccines, should be reported to the Public Health Agency of Canada: http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/im/aefi-form_e.html

Reactions involving medical devices should be reported to the Health Products and Food Branch Inspectorate: http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/dhp-mps/compli-conform/prob-report-rapport/rep_md_prob-rap_inc_im_tc-tm_e.html

To report reactions involving products not listed above, visit: http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/media/reaction/index_c.html

Informative Videos

School danger

As if the cleaning compounds and the mould weren't enough, a new danger has been discovered in our schools. Video presentations are available using the following link.
http://www.mcs-international.org/red_alert_1_wifi_schoolchildren.html

Toys

In the mood for more videos? Here's a 15-minute video on hazards of chemicals with links toward the end for safer toys, household products, etc.
http://ecojustice.wordpress.com/2008/05/12/new-video-contaminated-without-consent/

AEHA-Ottawa Source Book

The ***AEHA-Ottawa Source Book*** – a guide to products and services for the environmentally sensitive is $10 for Members, $12 for Non-members.

To order your copy, contact office@ehaontario.ca or call our Help Line at 613-860-2342.

Pest Control Information

We're moving toward the pesticide ban we all wanted but now what? Your university student daughter reports roaches in her apartment; your roses are suddenly covered in aphids; and you have to admit, you really do hate earwigs.

There is help! A number of resources are available now to help you fight insects without toxic chemicals.

Check your local library or the Ottawa Public Library online for book choices such as

- Natural Pest Control, by Andrew Lopez
- Organic Pest Control for Home and Garden, by Tim Roberts
- Natural Insect Control by Warren Schultz.

Several companies in Canada offer non-toxic insect control such as Natural Insect Control (NIC) at www.naturalinsectcontrol.com and Powder Trap at www.powdertrap.com

A new encyclopedic book on pest control is now available too; more information is at http://www.thebestcontrol2.com

James Lunney, MP – on Bill C-51

Mr. James Lunney (Nanaimo—Alberni, CPC) spoke in the House on Bill C-51, June 16, 2008.

Here is an excerpt:

Mr. Speaker, it is fair to say that Bill C-51 has attracted a fair bit of attention. We have been debating it again today.

Bill C-51 is an act to amend the Food and Drugs Act and to make consequential amendments to other acts. Needless to say, the Food and Drugs Act definitely needs updating. It is an old act. It goes back to about 1934. It has had a few tweaks along the way, but certainly it is time for some updates to the Food and Drugs Act.

There are some good provisions in the bill, that is for sure, including life cycle monitoring of pharmaceutical drugs and mandatory reporting of adverse events. These are very positive things that need to be done because there are serious concerns about these products.

The public response overwhelmingly on the negative side has been over concerns about what will happen to the natural health products industry under the regulations.

In illustrating some of those concerns, I wish to make reference to a letter that I received recently from a number of very distinguished and concerned scientists, which illustrates the concerns that are out there. I received this letter on May 4. It is a copy of a letter to the minister and states:

We, the undersigned, are physicians, scientists and practitioners of international origin with considerable experience in the use of natural health products. We are gathered in Vancouver at the Fairmont Hotel to attend the 37th Annual International Conference on Orthomolecular Medicine . . .

We are most concerned that the Bill will lead to loss of access to valuable food supplements and other nutritional products for our patients and for many others, who have often found such products to be essential in maintaining their health.

Another point they make is this:

Nutritional products are qualitatively different from pharmaceutical products and carry an undetectably small risk of harm . . .

They provide a reference from the journals about that.

They continue:

There are therefore no grounds to impose on them the same risk-benefit analysis structure that is proposed for all therapeutic products under this bill.

The majority of organizations and commercial bodies operating in the natural product field are run by individuals or are small businesses. The regulatory hurdles proposed will be too high for many of them to achieve, and the penalties proposed for infringements of this bill are grossly disproportionate and unnecessarily severe.

They go on to state:

We are also concerned at the potential impact on the regulatory climate in our own countries, given the international trend to harmonization.

We encourage your department to open dialogue with our Canadian colleagues in the hope we can find a workable solution.

This letter is signed by scientists from around the world.

Th[e] discussion we are having in Canada about Bill C-51 to amend the Food and Drugs Act is being noticed by health care practitioners from other countries. They are concerned about the impact it will have on regulations in their own countries.

...The problem is that, given the history of actions by Health Canada over the past several years, the increased powers and the changes proposed by Bill C-51 give informed Canadians a very great cause for concern ... certainly regulation is necessary. Everyone is in support of regulation. It is the type of regulation that is being considered here and the concerns about whether those regulations are appropriate for the low risk and the natural character of these products. By nature they are low risk, they are low cost, they are non-patentable items, they are more akin to food, concentrated food items, vitamins, minerals, amino acids, which are components of protein, and that is the stuff we are made out of, and therefore by nature it is low risk and well tolerated.... We are concerned about the availability of these products.

This article comes from Westcoaster.ca, http://www.westcoaster.ca

The Sensitive Diner

The sensitive diner travels

In Toronto recently, we tried several restaurants in the hopes of avoiding allergies to wheat, dairy and corn, and exposure to gluten. We did very well!

In the Harbourfront area of downtown, two restaurants:

Il Fornello. Italian restaurants always make me worry as the menus seem to be heavy on the pasta and we can't be sure what kind of broth has been used to make risotto. Surprise! After looking at page one of the menu and seeing one pasta or pizza dish after another, we turned the page over to find a whole list of gluten-free (i.e., wheat free) pasta choices, and menu choices that also offered Ontario-grown meat and produce. The server said to tell him about any food sensitivities, and he would accommodate. Which he did---no basket of bread appeared on the table. And the food was excellent, with a wonderful view of the Toronto Harbour. Il Fornello has several other locations throughout Toronto.

The Storehouse. Lots of seafood, and food allergies accommodated without question. Only one glitch: We did order steak one night only to have it show up with gravy...the server whisked it away and returned with freshly prepared, unadulterated steaks.

By Jane Wilson

Had a great meal somewhere where your allergies were accommodated? A pleasant, "clean" atmosphere? Let us know! We're all hungry, too!

About the Good Food Box

The Ottawa Good Food Box is a non-profit program that brings neighbours together to buy quality fresh fruits and vegetables. There are $10, $15 and $20 boxes, depending on your needs. The $10 box usually feeds a single person while the larger boxes are more suited for bigger families. We also offer a local, organic box for $25 during the local growing season. You save money because the Good Food Box buys produce in bulk from trustworthy suppliers and tries to buy local, when possible.

What do you get in a box?

Boxes are different every month but usually contain favourites such as lettuce, potatoes, apples, carrots, onions, as well as seasonal good buys such as oranges, strawberries, squash, cucumbers and so on. Boxes also contain a newsletter with nutritional information, recipes and cooking tips.

How does it work?

Customers order and pay for their box in the 1st week of each month, and pick up (from their local site co-ordinator) their box on the 3rd Wednesday of every month.

Who can participate?

Anyone. There are pickup sites located all across Ottawa and the Ottawa Good Food Box is always looking for volunteers to start new sites in their neighbourhood.

Interested? Want more information?

If you are interested in starting a site or just want to know more about whether the Ottawa Good Food Box is for you, please contact us at 613-860-6767. Volunteers are always needed for this program. Contact Natasha Beaudin at 613-233-4443 ext.2203.

www.ottawagoodfoodbox.ca goodfoodbox@centretownchc.org

Please call 613-860-6767 to place an order.

For more information and a listing of Ottawa Good Food Box pickup sites, visit www.ottawagoodfoodbox.ca

Plasco project: keep your eye on this one

Ottawa has been in the news lately for a proposed garbage-to-energy project, to be built by Plasco Energy Group.

The theory behind the process is that all garbage from residents that cannot be recycled will be heated at high temperatures so that it turns into several compounds that can be reused, as well as a burnable gas to be used for energy. The proposed plant will cost $125 million.

"Not so fast," says Paul Connett, a retired professor of environmental chemistry, in an interview with the Ottawa Citizen. "This could be a huge embarrassment."

Connett says that organic matter can and should be separated out from residential garbage, and he adds ominously that "fly ash" from the combustion process could escape into the atmosphere along with "nanoparticles" that can affect people's health.

Plasco head Rod Bryden says that's impossible as there is no smokestack or other way for anything to get into the air from the Plasco process.

Ottawa area residents should stay focused on this issue and be sure you and your city councilor have all the information on this project.

Jane Wilson ♦

Proposed law would require all products with toxic ingredients to have hazard label

Sarah Schmidt, Canwest news service

Published: Friday, May 30, 2008

Everyday products sold in Canada – from lipstick to laundry detergent – would be forced to carry warning labels listing toxic ingredients as hazardous under a private member's bill backed by consumer groups.

Bolstered by the environmental law group Toxic Free Canada and the Quebec consumer group Options Consommateur, Peter Julian of the New Democrats tabled legislation yesterday requiring that all products sold in Canada have clear warning labels specifying their toxic substances.

Hazard labelling legislation has already been adopted in the European Union and California.

In Canada, the cosmetics industry must list all ingredients in their products, but there is no provision for the identification through hazard labelling of any toxic ingredients.

Personal care products, in particular, contain numerous chemicals, and some are known carcinogens, endocrine disruptors, reproductive toxins or immune toxicants. They include lead acetate, ammonium persulfate, phthalates, and dimethylamine.

"You shouldn't have to compare notes from five different sources to figure out what kind of toxic product you're purchasing. The right to know is not the right to do a lot of research so you can eventually find out the health concerns around that product," said Mr. Julian, who represents the B.C. riding of Burnaby-New Westminster.

Hazard labelling would use distinct symbols or letters for each hazard class, based on scientific evidence compiled by government agencies.

This would be in addition to current hazard labelling that indicates corrosive, flammable or explosive ingredients.

But Darren Praznik, president of the Canadian Cosmetics, Toiletries and Fragrances Association, said hazard labelling isn't necessary because all products on store shelves are safe.

"If an ingredient presents a risk to human health, that ingredient is either banned or it is restricted to prevent that risk to human health." ♦

Le jeudi 01 nov 2007

Les employeurs doivent s'adapter aux hypersensibles

André Fauteux

Agence Science-Presse

En 2003, 12,6 % des Américains disaient être hypersensibles à l'environnement et 1,8 % avoir perdu leur emploi à cause de cette condition. Les résultats de ce sondage sont parus dans Environmental Health Perspectives, une prestigieuse revue médicale publiée par le ministère fédéral américain de la santé.

Au Canada, peu d'employeurs savent qu'ils ont l'obligation légale d'accommoder les hypersensibles. «Cet état pathologique constitue une déficience et ceux qui en souffrent ont le droit d'être protégés en vertu de la Loi canadienne sur les droits de la personne, qui interdit toute forme de discrimination fondée sur une déficience», affirme la Commission canadienne des droits de la personne. «Comme pour les autres types de déficience, les personnes hypersensibles à l'environnement ont droit à des mesures d'adaptation en vertu de la loi.»

Accommodements raisonnables anti-pollution

Tim McGurrin est un patron en or. «Dès qu'il m'a embauchée, il a fait remplacer le tapis de mon bureau par de la céramique et il s'est assuré que mes collègues comprennent que je requière un environnement sans parfum», explique Barbara Leimsner. Rédactrice de discours au siège social de Postes Canada, à Ottawa, Mme Leimser est atteinte d'hypersensibilité environnementale depuis dix ans, à la suite d'une surexposition à des produits chimiques lors de rénovations effectuées simultanément à la maison et au bureau.

L'hypersensibilité est un «groupe d'états pathologiques chroniques complexe et souvent mal compris» qui vient d'être reconnu par une politique adoptée par la Commission canadienne des droits de la personne (CCDP). «Les personnes hypersensibles ont des réactions indésirables à des agents environnementaux courants dans le cadre bâti, ce qui comprend les champs électromagnétiques et les produits chimiques qui se trouvent dans les matériaux de construction, le mobilier, les produits de nettoyage et de reprographie, les parfums et les pesticides», explique un rapport sur l'aspect juridique des hypersensibilités publié par la Commission.

Madame Leimsner éprouve notamment une fatigue extrême, des maux de tête, des bourdonnements dans les oreilles et autres problèmes neurologiques lorsqu'elle est exposée à certains polluants.

Certains médecins croient encore que l'hypersensibilité est d'origine psychosomatique. «Il n'y a pas de preuve objective que c'est le cas, bien que cela fasse l'affaire de certains employeurs et assureurs», explique le Dr Lynn Marshall, codirectrice du comité de santé environnementale du collège ontarien des médecins de famille. Il est significatif que la Commission des droits de la personne reconnaisse que la prépondérance de la preuve est telle que cette condition doit être reconnue par une politique nationale.

Le médecin de Mme Leimsner, le Dr Ross Mickelson, avait recommandé qu'elle bénéficie d'un bureau fermé doté d'un purificateur d'air et situé loin de sources de pollution tels les photocopieurs. Le personnel d'entretien de son immeuble utilise désormais une foule de produits sans odeur, allant du nettoyant à plancher au savon à main, en passant par la peinture et le tapis. «Désormais, je peux me concentrer sur mon travail et non ma santé», dit Mme Leimsner.

Son patron, le directeur des communications de la Société canadienne des postes, souligne que les mentalités ont évolué. «Tout le monde reconnaît la valeur d'avoir des employés protégés contre la pollution. J'ai moi-même une petite fille allergique et plusieurs de nos employés ont des allergies graves. Ça n'a pas été facile d'accommoder Barbara, mais si ce n'était pas impossible. Il était important qu'elle se sente partie de notre équipe.»

Une allergie aux polluants?

L'hypersensibilité n'est pas une allergie comme telle. Si l'auteur français Marcel Proust se plaignait déjà d'intolérances aux parfums au début du siècle dernier, la maladie ne fut décrite que dans les années 1940 par l'allergologue Theron G. Randolph. Le père de ce qui deviendrait l'Académie américaine de médecine environnementale constatait que certains de ses patients ne répondaient pas aux traitements classiques. À force de les questionner, il découvrit que leurs intolérances avaient été déclenchées par une ou des surexpositions à des produits chimiques. Et que leur corps surchargé ne pouvait se désintoxiquer à moins de cesser toute exposition aux polluants.

Employers Must Adapt To The Needs of Hypersensitive People

André Fauteux

Agence Science-Presse

In 2003, 12.6% of Americans said they were hypersensitive to the environment, and 1.8% said they lost their employment because of this condition. The results of this survey appeared in Environmental Health Perspectives, a prestigious medical magazine published by the American health department.

In Canada, few employers know that they have a legal obligation to accommodate hypersensitive people. "This medical condition is a handicap, and those who suffer from it have the right to be protected under the Canadian Human Rights Act, which forbids any form of discrimination based on a handicap", declares the Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC). "As with other types of handicaps, people who are hypersensitive to the environment have a right to adaptation measures under the law."

Reasonable Anti-Pollution Accommodation

Tim McGurrin is a golden employer. "As soon as he hired me, he had his office carpets replaced with ceramics and he made sure my colleagues understood that I need a perfume-free environment," explains Barbara Leimsner. A speech writer at the head office of Canada Post in Ottawa, Ms. Leimser has had environmental hypersensitivities for ten years, following an overexposure to chemical products when renovations were done simultaneously at her home and her office.

Hypersensitivity is a group of often misunderstood complex chronic medical conditions which was recently recognized in a policy adopted by the Canadian Human Rights Commission. "Hypersensitive people have adverse reactions to every day environmental agents, including electromagnetic fields and chemical products found in construction materials, furniture, cleaning and copying products, perfume and pesticides," explains a CHRC report on the legal aspects of hypersensitivities.

When exposed to certain pollutants, Ms. Leimsner suffers from extreme fatigue, headaches, buzzing in the ears and other neurological problems, among others.

Some physicians still believe that hypersensitivity is psychosomatic. "There is no objective evidence that this is the case, even though it suits certain employers and insurers," explains Dr. Lynn Marshall, Co Director of the environmental health committee of the Ontario College of Family Physicians. It is significant that the Human Rights Commission recognizes that the preponderance of evidence is such that this condition must be recognized by a national policy.

Ms. Leimsner's physician, Dr. Ross Mickelson, had recommended that she get a closed office with an air purifier and away from pollution sources such as photocopiers. The maintenance staff of her building now uses many unscented products, from floor cleaners to hand soap, including paint and carpets. "Now I can concentrate on my work and not on my health," says Ms. Leimsner.

Her boss, the communications director of Canada Post, points out that mentalities have evolved. "Everybody recognizes the value of having employees protected against pollution. Personally, I have a little girl who has allergies, and many of our employees have serious allergies. Accommodating Barbara was not easy, but it was not impossible. It was important that she feel part of our team."

An Allergy To Pollutants?

Hypersensitivity is not an allergy as such. French writer Marcel Proust was already complaining about intolerances to perfume at the beginning of last century, but the illness was described only in the 1940s by allergist Theron G. Randolph. The father of what would become the American Academy of Environmental Medicine observed that some of his patients did not respond to standard treatments.

By dint of questioning them, he discovered that their intolerances had been triggered by overexposures to chemical products, and that their overloaded bodies could not detoxify unless all exposure to pollutant stopped.

This article first appeared in November 2007. ♦

Top: Linda Nolan-Leeming, President, leading a group of walkers, AEHA-Ottawa Walk 2008, Andrew Haydon Park. Below: Carole Lebel and Mary de Bassecourt in front of banner, courtesy of Murray Kydd.

HELP LINE

Volunteers Still Needed!

Our Help Line volunteer team is growing, but more volunteers are still needed to pick up Help Line phone messages. Instructions and referral information will be provided. Please contact office@ehaontario.ca and your e-mail will be forwarded to Carole, or call the Help Line at 613-860-2342 and leave your name, number and a request to speak to Carole.

When You Need Support . . .

One of the problems with having allergies, sensitivities or multiple chemical sensitivities, is that too often people don't understand what you're going through. Even your partner or family members may not "get it"!

When I told my mother, who was a registered nurse, that I too have celiac disease like my sister, she said, "But you can have cookies?"

A dear friend of mine told me she was hosting a weekend guest who had severe allergies to cats; her last cat had died recently so she thought, no cats, no problems. I pointed out to her that the cat could live on in pet dander throughout her house, in carpets, bedding and furniture, and that her friend could become really sick.

And who hasn't gone to a theatre or a meeting or something important like your child's graduation, only to have to leave because of someone's excessive use of cologne or fabric softener . . . but your family thinks you're nuts?

There hasn't been much help for allergy sufferers in terms of help educating the general public, and maybe we should work on that.

In the meantime, do you have any stories of how you've informed or educated family, friends, co-workers or employers?

Let us know!! In the meantime, we'll keep researching!

Jane Wilson ♦

Good times at Walk 2008. Above, L-R: Lynne Bricker, Iris Thorogood, Cara Bedford, Mary de Bassecourt and Carole Lebel. Right: Murray Kydd with camera rolling.

For OPTIMUM Cellular Health – USANA produces state-of the-art products designed to provide optimal nutrition for every cell in your body. Healthy cells help maintain healthy tissues, organs, **immune** system ... and a healthier YOU!

Carrie Greschner carriegreschner@shaw.ca Ph #: 1 866 540 3967 WEBSITE: http://www.carrie.usana.com

These images are copyright of USANA Health Sciences and have been reproduced with its permission.

Announcements & Member classifieds

This section is devoted to announcements and FREE want ads/for sale items in support of AEHA members and pertaining to Environmental Sensitivities.

Looking for Healthy Housing: Apartment, rooms in a house or houseshare. I'm responsible, quiet, a good communicator and moderately chemically sensitive. Please call Heidi 819-351-1801, hcrea019@uottawa.ca

Mature male with ES, who has had a challenging year with housing issues, is looking for a camping companion (male or female) this summer in Ontario. If this might interest you, please call me, and let's talk: 705-745-9692.

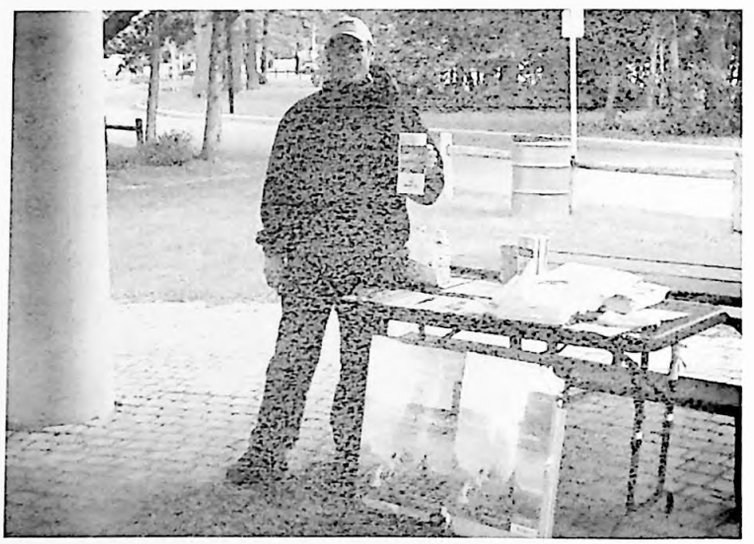
LOOKING FOR A SAFE PLACE to have minor **sewing** repairs and alterations? I may be able to help you. Pricing is negotiable and timing is flexible. Call Carole 613-829-0084, carole_lebel@yahoo.ca.

Looking to Buy – an MCS-safe, secluded 2-3 bedroom bungalow, no neighbours, for under $185,000. Anywhere north of 7 between Ottawa and Parry Sound, within 1 hour source of year-round non-supermarket organic food. Linda Sepp 416-766-2862, urbanfengshui@hotmail.com

Wanted: A safe, temporary place for 2-4 days in Halifax or nearby towns. No new renovations and a room without varethane floor finishes. I'm in Nova Scotia now and would appreciate your call. Margaret 902-826-7960; messages accepted, or email tbetts@hfx.eastlink.ca.

Responsible woman, **AEHA member, MCS, seeking occasional overnight accommodation**. Willing to pay small fee. Please contact AEHA Hotline at 613-860-2342 and tell them you're calling about Rhonda's ad.

Walk 2008 Sponsors at their displays on May 24, 2008
Above: Rainbowfoods, Below: The Allergy Guy



Do you need safe accommodations or have a safe house, apartment or room to rent – or know someone who does? Please check out the postings for Safe Housing on the EHAO bulletin board at http://aeha.ca/yabb/YaBB.pl New listings are being added all the time. So many of our members need safe housing – can you help?

The Help tab on the bulletin board lists the steps for registering an account then logging in. If you still have difficulty getting registered or logging in, please contact webmaster@aeha.ca.

You may also find other items of interest to you on our bulletin board. The more people who use the bulletin board, the more effective a tool it will become.

Another option is the Canada-wide Safe Housing Connection that also connects people needing accommodation with safe housing. Contact Philip at 1-613-278-0463.

Dad's Hidden Influence

A father's legacy to a child's health may start before conception and last generations

By Tina Hesman Saey

Pregnant women know the drill. Don't drink. Don't smoke. Don't eat too much fish. Take vitamins. Mothers have long shouldered the responsibility, and the blame, for their children's health. Fathers don't usually face the same scrutiny.

How a man lives, where he works, or how old he is when his children are conceived doesn't affect their long-term health, scientists used to think. But growing evidence suggests that a father's age and his exposure to chemicals can leave a medical legacy that lasts generations.

Animal studies demonstrate that drugs, alcohol, radiation, pesticides, solvents, and other chemicals can lead to effects that are handed from father to son. Human studies are less clear, but some show that fathers play a role in fetal development and the health of their children.

Teenage dads face increased risk that their babies will be born prematurely, have low birth weight, or die at birth or shortly afterward, a new study in *Human Reproduction* shows.

Babies of firefighters, painters, woodworkers, janitors, and men exposed to solvents and other chemicals in the workplace are more likely to be miscarried, stillborn, or to develop cancer later in life, according to a review in the February *Basic & Clinical Pharmacology & Toxicology*.

Fathers who smoke or are exposed at work to chemicals called polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons put their children at risk of developing brain tumors.

And, older fathers are more likely to have children with autism, schizophrenia, and Down syndrome and to have daughters who go on to develop breast cancer.

Though some of these observations are decades old, attitudes lag even further behind, says Cynthia Daniels, a political scientist at Rutgers University–New Brunswick in New Jersey. Dads aren't held accountable if something goes wrong during fetal development.

Matter of math

Since men make new sperm every 74 days, people used to reason, the genetic slate is wiped clean every couple of months. And even if a man makes defective sperm, the "all-or-nothing" view of reproduction holds that damaged sperm don't fertilize eggs. No harm. No foul.

So no one bothers to remind men to protect themselves against environmental toxins. There are no images of "crack dads" and "crack babies" in the media like those ofwomen who harm developing fetuses with drug and alcohol use, Daniels said in February at a meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science held in Boston.

When someone does study fathers-to-be, the focus is usually on fertility, not on the consequences for children's health, she says.

Yet even fertility messages meet resistance from many men.

Harry Fisch, director of the Male Reproductive Center and a urologist at Columbia University Medical Center, found that out when he suggested that men, like women, have ticking biological clocks.

Men can produce sperm throughout life, but that doesn't mean their cells are forever young.

"Every cell in the body ages," says Fisch. "Every cell. The older you get, the more chance of an abnormality. The same thing goes for sperm."

Men younger than 20 and older than 30 make more abnormal sperm than men in their 20s. These damaged sperm could create an unhealthy embryo or pass on damage that could lead to birth defects or illness in offspring.

It is not a popular message.

"Men do not want to hear this," Fisch says. "When my book came out, I got e-mails. I got faxes saying, 'How dare you say this? How can you say this? We know that there are men in their 70s having healthy children.'"

Despite these anecdotal accounts of elderly dads, studies demonstrate that older men are at increased risk of passing on genetic abnormalities. It's a matter of math.

"Men do not want to hear this," Fisch says. "When my book came out, I got e-mails. I got faxes saying, 'How dare you say this? How can you say this? We know that there are men in their 70s having healthy children.'"

Despite these anecdotal accounts of elderly dads, studies demonstrate that older men are at increased risk of passing on genetic abnormalities. It's a matter of math.

> "Every cell in the body ages. Every cell. The older you get, the more chance of an abnormality. The same thing goes for sperm."
>
> — HARRY FISCH, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER

Women are born with all the eggs they will produce in their lifetime. The cells that give rise to eggs divide 24 times, all before birth. But the cells that produce sperm continue to divide throughout a man's lifetime. Each year after puberty, a man's sperm-producing cells replicate about 23 times. Every time the cells divide is another chance for error.

As a result, the sperm produced by a 40-year-old man have gone through about 610 rounds of replication. That's 610 chances of introducing a mutation in the DNA, or improperly divvying up genetic material.

Parents over age 40 are six times more likely to have children with Down syndrome than 25-year-old parents, Fisch and colleagues showed in a 2003 study in the Journal of Urology. An extra copy of chromosome 21 causes Down syndrome. This extra chromosome is just as likely to come from dad as mom in the older couples.

Older dads also have a higher risk of fathering children with rare mutations that cause dwarfism or a premature aging disease called Hutchinson-Gilford progeria syndrome.

But sometimes aging fathers pass along traits that can't be traced to only a single mutation. Fathers 40 and older have an increased chance that their children will develop complex disorders such as autism or schizophrenia. There is growing evidence that those disorders are caused by defects in many genes and the way genes are turned off and on.

Scientists don't yet understand the changes that age induces in sperm-making germ cells, and environmental exposure presents an even bigger mystery. People come in contact with a plethora of chemicals every day. But it is no easy task to sort out exactly which ones, or which combinations, cause heritable problems. The effects chemicals and radiation may have on offspring don't always follow predictable patterns either.

And when researchers do find a clear link between a father's lifestyle and his children's health, it's not always clear what the data mean.

"What we can say is that we identified a group of fathers with adverse outcomes for their fetuses, but we don't have an idea of the mechanism," says Shi Wu Wen of the University of Ottawa in Canada and one of the lead authors of the study showing that

➲

babies of teenage fathers have a greater risk of birth problems.

Wen and his colleagues examined birth records for more than 2.6 million babies born between 1995 and 2000 to married, first-time, 20-something mothers in the United States. Looking at the husbands' ages, the team found that babies of teenage fathers, but not middle-age men, had an elevated risk of still birth, low birth weight, and other birth problems. The study was published online Feb. 6 in *Human Reproduction*.

"Preposterous" inheritance

Some animal studies showing paternal effects emerged years ago but were roundly dismissed, says Gladys Friedler, professor emeritus at Boston University.

Four decades ago, Friedler was studying tolerance to narcotics, one of the first steps of addiction. To find out if a mother rat could pass tolerance on to her offspring along with antibodies and other immune factors, as some scientists theorized, Friedler exposed female rats to morphine before pregnancy. Babies of exposed mothers were born much smaller than average. And those babies also went on to give birth to tiny babies, even though the offspring had never encountered the drug.

Friedler also gave male rats morphine before they bred. "To my total disbelief and bewilderment, paternal exposure also affected progeny," Friedler said at the AAAS meeting.

Her adviser dismissed the result. Morphine doesn't cause mutations, so the idea that males could hand down a trait without passing along a mutation seemed preposterous. The whole thing smacked of Lamarckism, the long-rejected idea that environmental influences can change an animal or plant's structure and offspring can inherit that change.

But in recent decades, scientists have discovered that chemical modifications to DNA and proteins can change the way genes are packaged and regulated without changing the genes themselves. Such modifications are known as epigenetic changes.

"What was Lamarckian is now epigenetic," Friedler says.

Epigenetic modifications act as a molecular scrapbook, preserving memories of events in parents' lives and handing them down to the next generation and beyond.

"There's a chromosomal memory," says Anne Ferguson-Smith, a developmental geneticist at Cambridge University in England. "The chromosomes remember whether they came from the mother or the father."

That memory is established in the form of a chemical mark called methylation. Methylation usually turns a gene off. At least 100 genes in humans are turned off only on the chromosome contributed by the mother or only on the chromosome that came from the father. Such genes are called imprinted genes because of the indelible impression parents leave on their offspring's DNA.

Several imprinted genes help build the placenta or encode growth factors that need to be tightly controlled so an embryo will develop correctly. "There's a contribution from both parents that is essential," Ferguson-Smith says. "One can't do without the other. They must work together to have a healthy offspring."

Imprints and other methylation marks are not encoded in the DNA. Instead the epigenetic modifications decorate chromosomes like ornaments on a Christmas tree. But these ornaments are heirlooms of a different type. It's as if a seedling grows straight from the ground already gussied up with tinsel and lights in the same places its parents were decorated. If a chemical or aging alters the epigenetic pattern on a man's chromosomes, his heirs could bequeath mismarked DNA to their children, too. Some mistakes may be as benign as exchanging a red bulb for a blue one. Other alterations, akin to placing the star on the lowest branch instead of the treetop, are likely to have more profound consequences.

Male mice exposed to cocaine, for example, pass memory problems on to their pups, a 2006 study in Neurotoxicology and Teratology shows. The male mice inhaled cocaine in long daily sessions akin to crack binges. When they mated with females never given coke, they had pups that had trouble learning and remembering where to find food in simple mazes. The problem was especially severe for female offspring. The researchers couldn't find any obvious DNA damage in coke-smoking males' sperm, but did find altered levels of two enzymes involved in the methylation of DNA in sperm-producing tissue in the father mice. The result suggests that epigenetic changes may be responsible for the offspring's behavior problems.

Fungicide legacy

Matthew Anway doesn't know whether the rats in his lab at the University of Idaho in Moscow have methylation problems. Some studies suggest they do, but Anway doesn't yet have definitive proof.

He can prove that male rats exposed to a fungicide in the womb can pass tumors and diseases of the prostate and kidney down for at least three generations. The rats could provide the first model for how prostate disease is inherited, he says.

Male babies born to mothers that had been injected with fungicide had prostate problems that mimic those seen during human aging. The second-generation rats also had more tumors, kidney defects, and higher rates of abscesses, cysts, and other infections than unexposed control rats. Germ cells in the testes of exposed rats also died more quickly than those in the control rats.

Subsequent generations of male rats also had the prostate and testes defects, and both male and female offspring developed kidney problems and tumors.

But only male rats could pass along the defects. The exposed rats bequeathed their fungicide legacy to their sons, grandsons, and great-grandsons even though none of the later generations were exposed to the chemical.

Exposed animals decrease production of enzymes that methylate DNA, Anway says. But he hasn't yet found consistent changes in the methylation patterns in exposed rats.

It's not clear whether Anway's results have any implication for human health. The rats were exposed to extremely high doses of fungicide through the completely unnatural route of injection.

What's important is that the male shares experiences with descendants for years to come. Further research could give new insights, Anway says, into how alterations in early development could lead to adult disease in humans.

If you have a comment on this article that you would like considered for publication in *Science News*, send it to editors@sciencenews.org. Please include your name and location.

References:

Anway, M.D., et al. 2005. Epigenetic transgenerational actions of endocrine disruptors and male fertility. *Science* 308(June 3):1466-1469.

Anway, M.D., S.S. Rekow, and M.K. Skinner. 2008. Transgenerational epigenetic programming of the embryonic testis transcriptome. *Genomics* 91(January):30-40.

Anway, M.D., and M.K. Skinner. 2008. Transgenerational effects of the endocrine disruptor vinclozolin on the prostate transcriptome and adult onset disease. *The Prostate* 68(April 1):517-529.

Chen, X.K., S.W. Wen, et al. In press. Paternal age and adverse birth outcomes: Teenager or 40+, who is at risk? *Human Reproduction*. Available at http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/humrep/dem403.

Choi, J.-Y., et al. 2005. Association of paternal age at birth and the risk of breast cancer in offspring: A case control study. *BMC Cancer* 5(Oct. 31):143.

Cordier, S. 2008. Evidence for a role of paternal exposures in developmental toxicity. *Basic & Clinical Pharmacology & Toxicology* 102(February):176-181.

Cordier, S., et al. 2004. Parental exposure to polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons and the risk of childhood brain tumors. *American Journal of Epidemiology* 159(June 15):1109-1116.

Croen, L.A., et al. 2007. Maternal and paternal age and risk of autism spectrum disorders. *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine* 161(April):334-340.

El-Saadi, O., et al. 2004. Paternal and maternal age as risk factors for psychosis: Findings from Denmark, Sweden and Australia. *Schizophrenia Research* 67(April 1):227-236.
Fisch, H., et al. 2003. The influence of paternal age on Down syndrome. *Journal of Urology* 169(June):2275–2278.
He, F., I.A. Lidow, and M.S. Lidow. 2006. Consequences of paternal cocaine exposure in mice. *Neurotoxicology and Teratology* 28(Feb. 3):198–209.
Lewis, B.H., M. Legato, and H. Fisch. 2006. Medical implications of the male biological clock. Journal of the American Medical Association 296(Nov. 15):2369-2371.
Thacker, P.D. 2004. Biological clock ticks for men, too. *Journal of the American Medical Association* 291(April 14):1683-1685.

Further Readings:

Skinner, M.K. 2008. What is an epigenetic transgenerational phenotype? F3 or F2. *Reproductive Toxicology* 25(January):2–6.
Frequently asked questions from the Epigenome Network of Excellence can be found at http://www.epigenome-noe.net/consulting/webconsulting.php.

From *Science News*, Vol. 173, No. 13, March 29, 2008, p. 200.

This article is reprinted in full with the kind permission of *Science News*.

rainbowfoods
natural foods

Your Centre for Organic Foods

We are a full-service natural foods store, located in Ottawa's West End. Whether you are looking for organic produce, supplements, natural body care, environment-friendly cleaning supplies or all-natural pet food, our friendly staff will be happy to help you on your way to a healthier lifestyle.

Monday to Friday 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Sunday 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Serving the community since 1979

1487 Richmond Road, Ottawa
(613) 726-9200

Check out our website for specials & current events:
www.rainbowfoods.net

PEINTURE ECO-AMICALE
REVOLUTION
ECO-FRIENDLY PAINTING

a completely environmentally friendly approach to painting

Revolution works with a number of eco-friendly paint producers to offer a greater variety of colours and finishes to our clients who suffer from environmental sensitivities or who simply care for the welfare of our planet.

We use paints that are made from renewable and biodegradable materials and are easily recycled. They are durable, washable, and super-adhering and are tintable to over 6300 decorator colours. Made with no petroleum or organic solvents, they eliminate the emissions of volatile organic compounds (VOC) into the air we breath.

Guy Cousineau | 819.459.1808 | revolution@295.ca

A REVOLUTION IN CUSTOM PAINTING

Allergy Sufferers
Are You Sleeping With Unwelcome Guests?

Our mattress sanitizing service is dedicated to providing better health and quality sleep. Many people are not aware of the health risks associated with their mattress, and most do not know that there is a solution!

Allergy sufferers and non-allergy sufferers alike highly benefit from sleeping on a clean and sanitized mattress and pillow. Sanimat is truly dedicated to ridding your mattress of dust mites and other contaminants. That is why we offer a free, no-obligation allergen test, so that you see first-hand if you are sleeping with unwelcome guests.

Call to Book Your Free SDMC Test

SANIMAT
Allergy Relief Cleaning Services

613-321-3382 www.sanimat.ca

NutriChem™
COMPOUNDING PHARMACY AND CLINIC

Specialized Compounded Prescriptions
Largest Selection Homeopathic Products
Genestra • Thorne • Metagenics
Body Chemistry Balancing (BCB)
Bio-Identical Hormones

1303 Richmond Rd, Ottawa ON
(613) 820-4200
www.nutrichem.com

InAIR Environmental Ltd.

Donald M. Weekes
CIH, CSP

1390 Prince of Wales Dr., Suite 503
Ottawa, Ontario K2C 3N6

Phone 613.224.3863
Fax 613.224.2561
don.weekes@inairenvironmental.ca

Asbestos & Lead Abatement
Mould & Flood Remediation
Drinking Water Testing
Training Courses
IAQ Surveys

InAIR Environmental Ltd.

Afraid to breathe?

I Can Breathe® Carbon Filter Masks are now available in Canada

These masks feature a replaceable carbon filter inside a lightweight, washable shell. Folds flat and can easily be carried in purse or pocket. **Perfume**, **smoke**, & **exhaust** fumes are no longer a problem. Recommended for **Multiple Chemical Sensitivities** Comes in Tan, Blue-Gray, White, and Beige Lace. Also available: Silk or Organic Cotton Masks for **dust**, **pollen** and **dander;** Sleep EyeShade; Scent- and Chemical-free Dryer Sheets. Delivery by mail.

Call us at 905-826-3537 or order online at www.easilydone.com ♥ Ware's Wares

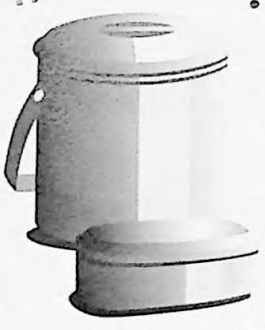
Organic Bedding

Organic Mattresses

Available at:
Arbour™ Environmental Shoppe
800 Bank St., Ottawa 613-567-3168 **ArbourShop.com**

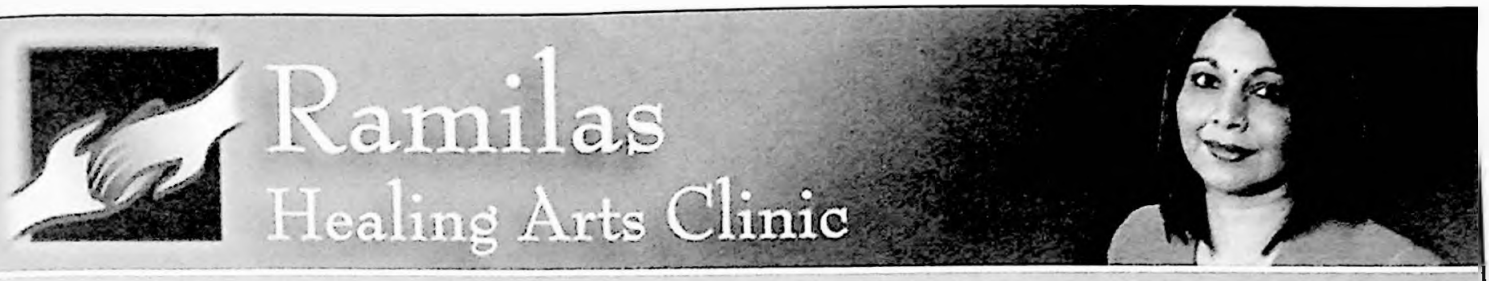
Now Available!

Safe Metal Storage Containers



- safe alternative to plastic and lined metal containers
  - non-leaching and toxin-free
  - litterless meals

Arbour™ Environmental Shoppe
800 Bank St., Ottawa 613-567-3168 **ArbourShop.com**



Great News for Allergy Sufferers

Now available to everyone. A powerful new approach that uses a simple and effective method to radically eliminate all symptoms of allergies, both Food and Environmental.

Once again enjoy your life, your family – and not worry about seasonal changes

Call for your appointment

www.ramilas.com

613 829-0427

108-68 Robertson Road, Ottawa

"Some of my symptoms, Allergies and sensitivities, upset stomach, indigestion, joint pain, nerve pain, bladder pain,changing moods, low energy, listlessness, back pain.

After seeing Ramila, my muscle and joint pains are gone, bladder inflammation are gone, tennis racket no longer spins in my hand. I can visit a shopping center, even walk through the perfume section without a problem. I can stay overnight at my friends who has cats. I can order what I like on the menu. I can snack on nuts , and eat apples after 25 years. I wear makeup and jewelery. I work and think clearly again." T.S.

ADVERTISING RATES

Eco-Sense

Business Card Size (3.5" x 2") $30 for 1 issue, $75 for 3 issues (same ad)	1/2 page (3.5" x 9" or 7.5" x 4.5") $75 ($195 for 3 issues)
1/4 page (3.5" x 4.25") $40 ($95 for 3 issues)	Full page (7.5" x 9.5") $135 ($375 for 3 issues)

Please e-mail your ad in JPEG format to office@ehaontario.ca.

Website

Website Advertising: $600 per year. For information, contact office@ehaontario.ca

Both Web & Eco-Sense

Additional discount for Web & *Eco-Sense* advertisers: If you choose 3 issues for the same ad for *Eco-Sense* and advertise on our website, a 25% discount will apply to your *Eco-Sense* ad.

Contact: office@ehaontario.ca or call Mary at 613-721-6910.

2008 EHAO Meetings & Events

Please note that the EHAO office will be closed during the month of August.

Fall 2008/Winter 2009 Events – to be announced in the next issue of *Eco-Sense*

September is Membership Renewal Month!

Please plan to renew your membership this fall on receipt of your renewal notice. Watch for an email or Canada Post notice in August or early September that will state the amount of your renewal fee. We value your support because membership fees help cover some of our rapidly growing service needs.

Thank you to our Walk 2008 Major Sponsors for their generous support.

rainbowfoods natural foods

RB Management Consulting Consultants en gestion
Ronald Bisson et associé.e.s and Associates Inc.

Prevention Education Support

THE ALLERGY GUY .COM

PS GlebePHARMASAVE Apothecary

Thank you also to our other sponsors for their generous support.

Hampton Wellness Centre
Dr. Farid Shodjaee, DDS
Parkdale Physiotherapy & Sports Injury Clinic